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Snejana Alt
Publications Editor

SSC.Editor@gmail.com

By Snejana Alt



The class of 2013 was welcomed by the SSC on August 20th in the USU cafeteria. It is always great to welcome so many new students and their families. Many of the current members helped with the orientation and baby-sitting for which you have our thanks. This year was particularly special because so many of our incoming students had little ones. Good news for the Parent-Tot group!

Coffee, pastries, and juice were provided before the orientation, giving everyone a chance to sign in and collect information about the Spouses Club and the school. Valere Lemon, the club's president, Jean Hoskins, our treasurer and the person responsible for the event's success, and the chairs of the Parent-Tot, Party, and Adult Social Committee welcomed everyone and talked about the function of the Spouses Club and what a valuable resource it is to everyone.

Dr. Wittman of the Office of Student Affairs talked to the new students and their spouses, preparing them for what lies ahead. He also provided them with the infamous *Perceived Happiness Chart*, which shows the spouses when the students have the heaviest workload. Fatima Bashir, from the USU Family Health Center, also spoke to the new students, bringing DEERS and Tricare to a human level of understanding. CDR McKay, the new Commandant of the School of Medicine and an alumnus of USUHS, provided helpful tips on how to survive medical school.



Following the Orientation, the married students and their families were given the chance to participate in the Spouses/Family Panel session where they could speak to students from the class of 2012 and their spouses. Allison Young, whose husband Colin is a MS IV, provided the new students with valuable information about third and fourth year clinical rotations and the Step One and Step Two exams. Panel members also discussed their field experiences at Operation Kerkesner and Operation Bushmaster.

After the panel, the new MS-Is and their sponsors went to lunch and returned to the school for the Presentation Ceremony, officially initiating them into the School of Medicine. During the ceremony, they took the Hippocratic Oath for the first time and were welcomed into the USU family.

Many thanks to those who worked so hard for the success of this event.

From the Vice-President:

Rebecca Patterson



On behalf of myself and Valere, club President, who was unable to submit to this edition of the newsletter due to a family emergency, I would like to welcome all our new members and say welcome back to our returning members. We look forward to the next year of socializing together and supporting each other. Thank you to everyone who participated in our New Member Orientation and contributed to it being a success. Also thanks to all our new members who were able to attend. For anyone who was unable to make it, please feel free to contact one of us with any questions you may have! We welcome any ideas and/or suggestions for a fun-filled upcoming year together.

Student Spouses Club Membership Application

If you are interested in being a member of SSC please fill out the form below and turn it in along with the annual dues check of \$30 (made payable to Student Spouses Club) so that we can process your application. Please return application & check to:

Student Spouses Club
c/o Jean Hoskins
2907 McMahon Rd
Wheaton, MD 20902

Last Name	First Name	Home Phone	Email Address
Street Address		City	ST Zip Code
Student's Full Name	Service Branch	Year of Grad.	Your DOB
Children's Names & Ages			
Committees you would like to have contact you with more information			

Officers 2008-2009**President**

Valere Lemon
vlemonrn@gmail.com

Vice President

Rebecca Patterson
sbspatterson@yahoo.com

Secretary

Courtney Salgado
studentspousesclub@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Jean Hoskins
jmcudflyer@aol.com

Committee Chairs**Adult Social**

Ruthie Washington
indipinochic@yahoo.com

Lauren Allemang
lauren.allemang@gmail.com

Fundraising

TBA

Membership

Karen Brillhart
karenbrillhart@yahoo.com

Parent Tot

Dana Palmer
dana.palmer@gmail.com

SSC Parties

Alisha Keehn
alimar25@hotmail.com

Publications Editor

Snejana Alt
SSC.Editor@gmail.com

Sunshine

Deb Rubio
flyer314@yahoo.com

White Coat Ceremony

By Dana Beam & Snejana Alt

The white lab coat is one of the most recognizable symbols of a physician. Many medical schools celebrate students' admission into the field of medicine by awarding them a short white coat, to be worn during their clinical experiences with patients. The white coat ceremony originated at the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine in 1989.

Today, over 100 medical schools practice this tradition. At USUHS, students receive their white coats at the end of their first year and will wear these white coats throughout their time in medical school. At graduation they will earn the privilege to wear the long white coats to distinguish themselves as they enter the profession of medicine as new doctors.



White Coat Ceremony, Class of 2012

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New Arrivals

Parents	Baby	Birthday	Weight/Length
Larry('12) & Sarah Williams	Eloise Audrey	May 20	7lb, 14oz/ 22in
Nathan ('10) and Ashley Kelsey	Blair Marie	June 8	6lb, 12oz/ 19in
Marc ('11) & Holly Kajut	Wyatt Banning	June 14	9 lb,10oz/ 21in
Jason('11) & Lisa Foerter	Luke Joseph	June 21	6lb, 3oz/ 20in
John('11) Jenna Jackson	Mia Alana	July 20	6lb, 8oz/ 20in
Keith ('12) & Dana Beam	Bella Ann	August 11	7lb, 13oz/ 21in

****Please notify the Sunshine Committee at sscsunshine@gmail.com of any other births.**



Meet the Members



**Jessica Saas
(2013)**

My name is Jessica Saas and my husband is Patrick. We both love to rock climb and met after we had joined the same rock climbing club. He is from Nevada and I am from Utah. I just finished some summer language classes studying Arabic down at GU and I hope to continue my studies there, but we'll see what happens. Patrick is in the Air Force branch. We are excited to start our adventure at USUHS as first-years.

Patrick and I both love to find new cool restaurants, or go to museums, or go dancing, or pretty much anything fun. We like our fruits and veggies and lean meats. I also love steak (sorry all ye vegans) but we are mostly fans of healthy eating. We are stoked about our new apartment right next to the Grosvenor metro stop and any of ya'all are welcome to hang out here anytime.



**Alaina Gray
(2012)**

I am a Georgia Peach and a graduate of Georgia Tech. I earned my degree in Business Management and have used my skills in various non-profit settings. I have been married to my husband, Kevin (Air Force), for 12 years. We have 3 children, a 5 year old biological daughter, a 3 year old adopted daughter from Guatemala, and a 2 year old adopted son from Guatemala. I currently enjoy taking care of them full-time. We live very close to USUHS in North Chevy Chase. I love studying the Bible, reading, digital scrapbooking, bicycling, exploring photography, spending time outdoors, gardening, baking, and entertaining close friends. When Kevin earns his medical degree, I hope to have earned my black belt in Tae Kwon Do through Coles Martial Arts Academy. And I love dark chocolate - the darker the better!



**Alisha Keehn
(2012)**

Although we hail from the same Northern California hometown in the wine and redwood country, my husband and I were definitely not childhood sweethearts! Reintroduced to each other in 1999, we have been inseparable ever since, except for those occasions mandated by the military. My husband, Marion (MS-II), is prior-service, enlisted, Army, where he spent 5 wonderful years playing in the Army band while I earned my graduate degree in public administration. We have two children: Nicholas, 3, and Grace, 15 months, who attend the NNMC CDC. We are happily expecting our third child in January. I work full-time at the American College of Medical Genetics as a Project Manager for a national newborn screening and genetic follow-up services grant. In our free time we love hiking, camping, reading books with and without pictures, running, watching movies, and spontaneous dance fests in our living room, particularly to the Beatles and Laurie Berkner.



Wedding Bells

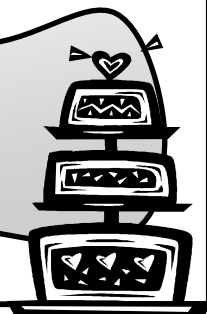
Bride

Kara Garcia (2013)

Groom

David Garcia (2012)

Date



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This ceremony was a great success, bringing in more students and supporters than ever before in USUHS history. Family and friends were invited to support the students and some even participated by helping the students don their white coats for the first time. The ceremony also acted as a reminder to the future physicians of their responsibility to medical ethics and their duty as military doctors and officers to care for those in harm's way.

On a personal note, one thing I was most proud of is that I was right there to coat my husband. That whole year of sacrifices - not seeing each other, missed dates and dinners - it all seemed all so worth it to see him wear that white coat. The fact that I got to put it on him made me feel like the sacrifices were not in vain. Just when you think the first year will never end, and the exams keep piling like a snow storm after snow storm, The White Coat ceremony makes it all worthwhile. Oh, what a morale booster!

That first year is behind us and we made it through as a stronger family.

Congratulations, Class of 2012!

Highlights from Bushmaster



By Sean Meagher

I enjoyed my time at Operation Bushmaster, though I admit I was a little intimidated by my perception of our objective: recall all the information from three years of military medical studies classes and hold on through the fast-paced cramfest of the preceding two weeks before our "deployment", then head to the field to be graded without much practice beforehand. However, in hindsight I can see that I was a little antsy and nervous. The staff and NCOs from the school want nothing more than for us students to excel, and at Ft. Indiantown Gap they did everything possible to ensure our success. I was happy to find out that we had two days of training 'in theater' before we started setting up each aid station to take patients. I have very little field experience, but I learned from the NCOs and prior service students. There always remains room for improvement in

everything: how to set up a tent, how to carry your M16, how to stow your gear/clothes in the tent overnight, etc. During the in-theater training days, we got a sense of what knowledge was crucial and what was trivial from the classroom portion of the MCM rotation. Of course, most of what is taught is good for practice in the future, but for Bushmaster, you can basically thrive on common sense, ATLS training, and your "Go Book".



During the exercise, there were some core learning points that were critical to master in order to do well: these are communica-

tion, trust, and flexibility. The training environment required efficient communication when working within the chain of command to receive and pass out information. Platoon commanders got their orders and then passed that out to each squad; additionally, the student leadership under evaluation had to appropriately communicate with their graders as well as with other students to accomplish the mission at hand. When there were 30

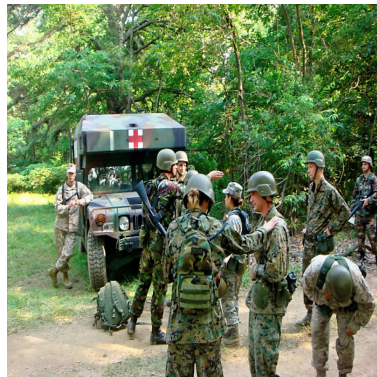
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ORIENTATION



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people in each group that were chomping at the bit to find out what needed to be done, we had to find the best way to inform them of the mission so that they could begin to plan their individual tasks. Next, Bushmaster reminded me of the value of trusting my classmates, both when I was the leader and when I was the follower. I needed to remember that my classmates were just as able as I was to get things done, so I had to be careful to avoid micromanagement. When I was not the leader, I had to trust those who had the "big picture", even if I thought things should be done differently. Finally, we were forced to work with very limited resources. We established each aid center with a small amount of medical supplies and litters, and had very few personnel to divide between security, litter bearers, medics, triage/evac officers, and patient ID trackers in addition to the assigned positions of CO, XO, surgeons, and radio operators. Furthermore, there were operational exercises at each station that forced us to remain flexible, so we often had to create makeshift items (decontamination stations, ambulance lanes, landing zones, triage/evac collection points, etc), and each person in the platoon almost always



performed two or three jobs during each evaluation period. Ultimately, the quicker your platoon can work as a well-oiled machine, the better you'll do and the less stressful the entire situation will be.

As for physical stressors, work days last at least 16 hours and we got very little sleep each night. On that note, 16-18 hours on your feet in uncomfortable boots is a miserable experience. Be prepared for sore feet and blisters. The staff will prepare you ad nauseum for heat casualties, but take it seriously...drink like a fish and stay hydrated. Thankfully, our group went to Bushmaster with great weather (never hotter than 85° F, sunny, nice breeze), and we didn't have any heat casualties, but that didn't mean that we weren't working hard during the day. Eat as much as you can stomach of your meals because you'll use all that energy. Also, be prepared for rainy days and what obstacles that poses to the mission (people tend to huddle in the tent, they're less motivated to do hard work, it's more difficult to hear someone on the other side of the aid station, and patients need to be kept dry).

In the end, I'm thankful that my medical training included this exercise. I hope that when I do eventually practice in a deployed environment, many of the learning points I found during Bushmaster come back quickly and enable me to provide better care to those who need it. Also, Bushmaster pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I hope that during my Intern year the coping, prioritization, and time management skills I developed during that week will serve me when I'm pressed. Will I ever have to actually load an M997? Will I ever put a tourniquet on an amputation? Will I ever treat a rapidly decompensating patient with a UXO in his head in the field? Who knows, but now I'm familiar with some of these situations, I can better train my medics, and I hopefully won't be caught off guard and can instead learn how to be prepared for the unexpected.

Furthermore, I was able to exchange information with other spouses in my neighborhood and I think it will come in handy to have some friends who know how hard it is for a new family, such as mine, to adjust to a new home. Now this transition seems a whole lot less stressful and a whole lot more fun!

Thoughts about the Orientation

By Karla Villafan-Reed

The USU Student Spouses Club New Member Orientation held on the morning of August 20th provided a wonderful environment for me to learn more about what kind of services the University provides for its students and their families. From the medical clinic to employment opportunities to childcare, there is so much to take advantage of in this network if you know where to go and who to talk to! I was pleased to receive some very honest straightforward answers to my questions regarding life for the next four years.

USU STUDENT SPOUSES CLUB

Publications Editor
10225 Green Holly Terr
Silver Spring, MD 20902

WEBSITE

www.usuhs.mil/ssc/

EMAIL

studentspousesclub@yahoo.com

MISSION

The Student Spouses Club (SSC) is an organization for the spouses and significant others of any active duty officer students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. The goal of the SSC is to provide support, friendship, and community for student families through a variety of social and service activities throughout the year.

The SSC is a private, non-profit organization.

SSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Parent Tot Group

Sept. 9 - "Getting to know you" activity - Dana Palmer's home 10am
Sept. 11- Meet at Montgomery Mall playground 11am
Sept. 14 - meet at South Germantown rec. park playground at 10am
Sept. 23 - Playdate at Alaina Gray's home - time TBA
Sept. 25 - Mother's Night Out activity (MNO) - time and location TBA

For more information, please contact the SSC at studentspousesclub@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.usuhs.mil/ssc/

Uniformed Services University



Student Spouses Club